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**Conference of the Parties to the
Minamata Convention on Mercury
Second meeting**
Geneva, 19–23 November 2018
Item 5 (k) of the provisional agenda*
**Matters for consideration or action by the
Conference of the Parties: secretariat**

Review of the organizational arrangements of the secretariat

Note by the secretariat

1. In its decision MC-1/11, on the secretariat, the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury noted that a secretariat had been established pursuant to paragraph 1 of article 24 of the Convention; recalled paragraph 3 of article 24 designating the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to perform the secretariat functions for the Convention; and welcomed the offer of the Government of Switzerland to host the secretariat in Geneva and to provide an annual host country contribution of 1 million Swiss francs.

2. By the same decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to perform the secretariat functions initially through a secretariat of the Minamata Convention located in Geneva; decided to review the organizational arrangements, including location and the host country contribution, at its second meeting, in accordance with the spirit of the offer of the Government of Switzerland to host the permanent secretariat; and requested that, in the interim, the secretariat continue to cooperate and coordinate, as appropriate, with other relevant actors, including the secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the relevant units of the United Nations Environment Programme in order to make full use of relevant experience and expertise. The full text of the decision is reproduced in the annex to the present note.

3. Upon the conclusion of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme began to set up the secretariat of the Minamata Convention. An overview of the activities of the secretariat, including creating the secretariat as a new entity, setting up the premises of the secretariat, creating the posts of the secretariat, establishing the trust funds of the convention, commencing the implementation of the secretariat's programme of work, and establishing cooperation and coordination with other relevant actors, including the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and the relevant units of the United Nations Environment Programme, are set out in document UNEP/MC/COP.2/17.

4. In December 2017, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme received a letter from the then President of Switzerland, Ms. Doris Leuthard, confirming the content of the offer from the Government of Switzerland made during the first meeting of the Conference of the

* UNEP/MC/COP.2/1.

Parties to host the secretariat of the Minamata Convention in Geneva. The original letter, confirming the elements of the Swiss offer, is reproduced in document UNEP/MC/COP.2/INF/4.

5. In June 2018, the Presidency of the Minamata Convention extended to the Bureau a request made by one group within one of the United Nations regional groups that the secretariat provide the parties with information on the different services it provided, how different services could be purchased from the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions should the Conference of the Parties so decide, and how such purchases would influence the budget of the Minamata Convention.

6. On 19 July 2018, the Presidency communicated to the Bureau that no objection had been received to the request that the secretariat provide the information described in paragraph 5 above and that, if no objection was received from the Bureau members by 27 July 2018, the secretariat should proceed accordingly. No objection was received by the deadline set by the Presidency.

7. At various times over the course of 2018, the secretariat of the Minamata Convention has engaged with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions on cooperation and collaboration among the secretariats, as described in document UNEP/MC/COP.2/17. In that regard, a proposal for services and relevant costs was prepared by the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, entitled "Modalities for offering services to the Minamata Convention Secretariat", and submitted to the secretariat of the Minamata Convention. The proposal provided a basis for the preparation of the information requested by the Bureau, which is submitted for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting as document UNEP/MC/COP.2/INF/7, containing further information requested by the Bureau on possible services that the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention could purchase from the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, and their associated costs.

Suggested action by the Conference of the Parties

8. The Conference may wish to consider the matter of the secretariat and review the organizational arrangements, including the location and the host country contribution.

Annex

MC-1/11: Secretariat

The Conference of the Parties,

Noting that a secretariat has been established pursuant to paragraph 1 of article 24 of the Convention,

Recalling that paragraph 3 of article 24 of the Convention designates the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to perform the secretariat functions for the Convention,

Welcoming the offer of the Government of Switzerland to host the secretariat in Geneva and an annual host country contribution of 1 million Swiss francs,

1. *Decides* that 60 per cent of the host country contribution will be allocated to the General Trust Fund and 40 per cent will be allocated to the Special Trust Fund to support developing country delegate travel;

2. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to perform the secretariat functions initially through a secretariat of the Minamata Convention located in Geneva;

3. *Decides* to review at its second meeting the organizational arrangements, including location and the host country contribution, in accordance with the spirit of the offer of the Government of Switzerland to host the permanent secretariat;[1]

4. *Requests* that, in the interim, the secretariat continue to cooperate and coordinate, as appropriate, with other relevant actors, including the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and the relevant units of the United Nations Environment Programme in order to make full use of relevant experience and expertise.

[1] See UNEP/MC/COP.1/INF/8.